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**Sent:** Thursday, February 07, 2013 1:06 PM  
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**Subject:** NOTICE: Severe winter storm Friday - prepare today

To the research community

As you may have heard, a major winter storm is predicted to impact New England from Friday morning through Saturday. Forecasts indicate significant impacts will be felt in the Amherst area with 1 to 2 feet or more of heavy snow, damaging winds, and the potential for downed trees and power lines. While the campus should be able to maintain power to most areas, and the campus is doing everything they can to ensure it, preparations should begin now in case there may be periods of short or more extended campus power outages and other effects. In addition, there could be significant off-campus impacts for the campus community that could prevent access to campus for a period of time.

PI's, Lab Safety Coordinators, and Lab staff should begin to take steps immediately to:

- protect research
- ensure facilities remain safe
- everyone knows what and what not to do during and after the storm

Some things to think about as you make preparations on Thursday:

- Identify and make a plan for any research materials that are temperature sensitive. Inquire within your department and school or college for the availability of backup power for freezers and incubators.
- Fill Ziplock freezer bags with water and put them in -20°C freezers. This will help keep freezers cold in case of an outage. They can also be moved to refrigerators to keep items cold.
- Fill liquid nitrogen dewars so that they do not need to be tended to for a few days
- Autoclave biohazardous waste before the end of the day Thursday
- Do not place orders for perishable research materials
- Inform EH&S if the storage or containment of any materials could become hazardous with lack of power or ventilation.
- Ensure that the contact information on your lab door card is current and perhaps includes a cell phone number (make neat corrections if needed)
- Ensure chemicals and other hazardous materials are properly stored
- Ensure that non-critical equipment is turned off and unplugged prior to the storm (ie. computers) as power bumps could occur that may damage equipment
- Prepare a list of contact numbers for lab staff and campus resources

If the campus issues an emergency closure

- There are limited emergency personnel available to deal with a lab emergency
- Secure laboratories and research areas so that they remain safe if you are unable to return for a day or two
- Make sure lab doors are closed and locked
- **No experiments should be left running unattended.** Because of the uncertainty of access to buildings during and immediately after the storm, there is a possibility that researchers may be unable to get back to their labs to monitor and/or take care of ongoing experiments. Plus there is often a strong possibility of loss of power during a storm, which could knock out fume hoods, potentially creating a hazardous situation.
- **Lab personnel should not come to campus or work in laboratories.** Reminder that no one should work alone in a lab and that fume hoods and biosafety cabinets used to protect researchers do not operate during power outages and may suddenly go off.
- Look for campus email and text messages for updates on the campus status and availability of bus transportation

When you come back to campus,

- Carry your ID in case you are asked for identification by UMPD
- Make sure someone knows where you are on campus

Animal Care Services is making arrangements to ensure staff are onsite and available, despite severe storm conditions. Any concerns regarding Animal Care should be brought to the attention of the ACS Interim Director, Alison Bardwell (413-658-7472).

Since the storm is anticipated to arrive Friday, please use Thursday to make your preparations and make sure your lab is locked and secure before you leave on Thursday evening.

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